

## **Autoarchaeologies / of an artist-organiser / (doing fieldwork) in Finland and Latvia** [working title]

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As we live our lives in environments which are increasingly digitised—pervasively recorded in databases and archival systems, with each social exchange and encounter—the more concerns exist about personal data, metadata, and the digital shadow or footprint that we leave behind in our mobilities using mobile devices. How to make sense of and re-present activities and experiences— that have happened as open-ended events and processes in multiple contexts—over time? How do seemingly disparate activities or agencies relate to each other? How do past, present and future practices relate to each other in timelines? What do gaps reveal within our personal data archaeological record, and the stories we make? How does linear-temporal objectification of lived experience and work relate to non-linear enfoldings and relationships of what I—and we—organise, research, create, make and do?

This article-based doctoral dissertation develops a particular practice-based methodology, named here as autoarchaeologies, to reflect upon the author's 'artist-organiser' practice over an extended durational period of 2002-2020, mostly in Finland and Latvia. Beyond the artist being the 'artist', there are 5 additional roles of 'Artist as'.. -organiser, -researcher, -archivist, -archaeologist and -activist which are presented as interweaving into a hybrid arts method. Each of these roles are elaborated with reference to practice-based inspiration or literature. The author presents themselves as a researcher with an autoethnographic 'artistic fieldwork' approach to reflecting and contextualising hybrid arts in the social process and environment of its development, which includes media arts festivals & network culture scenes in North-East Europe. However, innovatively, the methodological perspective is to combine perspectives and data-recording methods from traditional and contemporary archaeologies 'of the recent contemporary past', which address the data records we are leaving in databases as we live, work, and travel in the contemporary world.

Early inspiration in the research process extended earlier augmented reality research using stratigraphy as an authoring metaphor, which then morphed into explorations of metadata and context with the emerging mobile media interfaces and concepts, such as locative media, in the early-mid 2000s. Participatory arts, design and online platforms have influenced a non-mediated, post-media perspective, and led towards a mix of meta-data coding, printing and mapping large-scale diagrams of the author's Curriculum vitae. Additional hand-drawn lines were added with the imagination of recovering a literally-personal touch to the mass of objectified and abstract data (2011a). Each of the 4 single-author case articles (2011b, 2013a, 2016, 2020) offer a different way to reflect and narrate the process that the author has been involved in over shorter or longer time periods. Each have their own loci, context, and stories, but are heterogeneous to each other, which—with the exception of author centred in narrative each in reflection—need their own meta-narrative. Hence, the ambition of the stratigraphs (see Figure below). However, as the thesis comes to it's conclusion, there are still subjectivities

and externalities that typically are left out from the narrative. It is this very personal data and perspective which the author tries to face up to at the end of the process as an outcome, to move onwards, still outgoing.

In the context of increased meta-data-augmented documentation of practices and everyday life, via ubiquitous mobile computing and online publishing platforms, there is arguably an increasing amount of personal (small or big) data to interpret and analysis. Critical activist-scholars are increasingly concerned with the age of surveillance capitalism, data-(self-)colonization. As a contribution to this field, this thesis chimes with the multitudes of data available about our own and others past activities, and the need to develop interpretative tools independent of corporate online platforms. It argues alongside prominent contemporary archaeological theorists that we can all (potentially) be archaeologists and narrators of our own personal data. This author joins the argument that we urgently need ways to take back control of our personal data on our own terms, and find ways to decolonize ourselves from platform capitalism. It offers a slow research, long-overview and personal approach, via practice-based research, of self-determination in how we can tell about our past, but also the potential freedom to share our lives in present and future societies.

### Articles included within thesis

**#1 Paterson, A. G. (2011a).** Stratigraphical recall: An auto-archaeological interpretation for artistic fieldwork. In L. Diaz (Ed.), Special issue of *Journal of Visual Arts Practices*, 10(1), ISSN 1470-2029. Bristol, England: Intellect. [https://doi.org/10.1386/jvap.10.1.51\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1386/jvap.10.1.51_1)

**#2 Paterson, A. G. (2021).** Kitchen labs: Spilling one's guts / Deep fry together. Accepted for publication in *Research in Art and Education* 1/2021. Helsinki, Finland: Aalto University ARTS. <https://researtsedu.com/>

**#3 Paterson, A. G. (2016).** Reflections on soil future(s), present(s) and past(s). In R. Šmite, A. Medosch, K. Mey, R. Šmits (Eds.), *Acoustic Space #15: Open fields*, Peer-reviewed Journal for Transdisciplinary Research on Art, Science, Technology and Society, Rīga-Liepāja, Latvia: RIXC-MPLab. Accessible from: <https://archive.org/details/agryfp-2015-soil-presents-pasts-futures>

**#4 Paterson, A. G. (2013a).** Mountain crowberries: Foraging and measuring knowledge or experience. In L. Beloff, E. Berger & T. Haapoja (Eds.), *Field\_Notes: Field and Laboratory as Sites for Art&Science Practices*, Helsinki, Finland: Finnish Bioart Society. Accessible from: [http://bioartsociety.fi/book/Field\\_Notes-From\\_Landscape\\_To\\_Laboratory-2013.pdf](http://bioartsociety.fi/book/Field_Notes-From_Landscape_To_Laboratory-2013.pdf)

**#5 Paterson, A. G. (2011b).** From a pull-down screen, fold-up chairs, a laptop and a projector: The development of Clip Kino screenings, workshops and roles in Finland. In G. Lovink & R. Somers Miles (Eds.), *Video Vortex Reader II: Moving images beyond YouTube*, Amsterdam, Netherlands: Institute of Network Cultures, 81-94. Accessible from: <http://networkcultures.org/video/vortex/vv-reader/>

### Additional Reference links

i) Presentation in the 'Creative Disruption in Archaeological Theory and Practice' track within 2018 Computer Applications and Quantitative Methods in Archaeology (CAA) international conference, 19-23.3.2018, at University of Tübingen, Germany. 'Towards Autarchaeological Archiving' [EN]: <https://archive.org/details/agryfp-2018-towards-autoarchaeological-archiving>

ii) Presentation at National Centre for Contemporary Arts (NCCA) Kaliningrad, Russia, with title 'Artistic Fieldwork in Finland and Latvia' [EN/RU]: <https://archive.org/details/agryfp-2013-artistic-fieldwork-in-finland-latvia-ncca-kaliningrad>

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- 3.7. (2018). Large-format personal data
- 3.8. (2020). Stratigraphical artefacts 2008-2015 & 1997-2009
- 3.9. (2021). Reflections on the Stratigraphical Recall diagrams
- 3.10. (2020). Source / *Lähde* / *Исток* / *Źródło*
- 3.11. (2022). Auto-archiving 20 years of Pixelache Helsinki
- 3.12. (2004). Negotiating *Rautatieasema*
- 3.13. (2023). Laving only traces, and a tribute to Prof. Mike Pearson.

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- 5.2. Artist as Researcher
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- 6.2.1. Contributions (who benefits, implications for society, companies, orgs etc)
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### 7. Epilogue (2 paths)

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- 7.2. Corner of 1905 gada iela & Rīgas iela

## 8. Articles (presented as facsimile)

- 8.1. (2011a): Stratigraphical recall: An auto-archaeological interpretation for artistic fieldwork
- 8.2. (2021): Kitchen Lab: Spilling One's Guts / Deep Fry Together
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- 10.2. (1997): Facsimile of Artist CV from Spring 1997 [redacted]
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## Supervision committee

*Supervisor in Aalto University*

**Prof. Dr. Lily Diaz-Kommonen**, Head of Research at Media Dept. Aalto University School of Arts, Design & Architecture, research leader of Systems of Representation group in Medialab, Helsinki, FI.

<http://medialab.aalto.fi> | <http://sysrep.aalto.fi/>

*Advisor since 2015..*

**Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vytautas Michelkevičius**, Head of Photography & Media Arts department & Head of Doctoral programme in Fine Arts, Vilnius Academy of Arts, curator and author, Vilnius, LT. <http://www.vda.lt> | <https://vilnius.academia.edu/VytautasMichelkevicius>

*Advisor since 2020..*

**Dr. Paul Reilly**, Visiting Senior Fellow, Department of Archaeology, Faculty of Humanities, University of Southampton, UK. <https://www.southampton.ac.uk/archaeology/about/staff/pr1r12.page?>

## Further acknowledgements

From January 2003 until April 2005, I was supported by a Leverhulme Study Abroad Studentship (UK). The report can be read here: <https://archive.org/details/agryfp-2005-leverhulme-study-abroad-studentship-report>

Note from 2003-2008, the artist-researcher (since 2011, Dr.) Teri Rueb, was my advisor, which was important during the 'Locative Media' themed artist-organiser period. <http://www.terirueb.net>

During the period 2005-2006, I was a member of the Urban Space and Experience Design (USED) research group, led by Dr. Mauri Kaupainen, a media art research project initiated by Minna Tarkka, M-Cult [<http://www.m-cult.org>] together with Heidi Tikka, Tapio Mäkelä, and Susanna Änäs (née Koskinen), at Helsinki Institute of Information Technology [<http://www.hiit.fi>].

During the extended period of doctoral candidacy, I have furthermore been a guest—in presense, and occasional collaborator—in 2 Media Lab research groups, Dr. Lily Diaz-Kommonen's 'Systems of Representation' group [<http://sysrep.aalto.fi>] from 2003-2006; and Kari-Hans Kommonen's 'Arki' group [<http://arki.mlog.taik.fi/>] from 2009-2011.

## Association affiliations

I have been an organising contributor to Piknik Frequency ry (Pixelache Helsinki), since January 2004 - ongoing, a formal member since 2007, board member 2008-2011 & 2015-ongoing. This has been a regular place of employment and support [<http://www.pixelache.ac>].

I have been a long-term friend and collaborator with RIXC Centre for New Media Culture in Rīga, Latvia since 2003 until 2018, involving freelance paid work especially in 2003-2004, 2009, 2013, 2015-2016 [<http://www.rixc.org>].

I have been a collaborator and co-curator of Nida Art Colony's Inter-Format Symposiums, together with Vytautas Michelkevičius in 2016 and 2018. [<http://nidacolony.lt>].

Furthermore, since 2011, I have also been a member of Finnish Bioart Society [<http://www.bioartsociety.fi>], and since 2013, a member of Open Knowledge Foundation Finland [<https://www.okf.fi>] with special interest group *AvoinGLAM* (Open Galleries, Libraries, Archives & Museums).

Each of these associations bias and influence my research thesis, but also give my wealth of experience, reference and example.





Figure: Artist CV Stratigraphy 2008-2015 artefact laid out in sequence on terrace, Helsinki, 1st August 2020.